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SUBJECT: UNAMID DEPLOYMENT LIMITATIONS

REF: KHARTOUM 434

1. (SBU) SUMMARY: UNAMID Chief of Planning informed FieldOff on April 2 that "there will be no new infantry battalions coming in this year to UNAMID" beyond those that are currently planned. Instead, he stated UNAMID would be prepared to receive the Egyptian and Ethiopian battalions and the enabling units of the Heavy Support Package (HSP). He said that the currently-planned 4,465 troops by December 31 would be the maximum possible given logistical constraints. The Planning Chief mentioned "disconnects" between troop contributor capitals and the United Nations about the size of incoming Nigerian and South African battalions. A Department of Peacekeeping Operations (DPKO) team will return to New York from El Fasher on April 3 to break the Planning Chief's recommendation to DPKO leadership in what the Planning Chief considers "a little dose of reality." END SUMMARY.

4,465 TROOPS BY DECEMBER 31

2. (SBU) In an April 2 meeting UNAMID Planning Chief Murdo Urquhart told FieldOff that his message to New York Headquarters is that "there will be no new infantry battalions coming in this year to UNAMID." Based on a timeline generated by Acting Chief of Integrated Support Services, Urquhart explained that UNAMID is prepared to receive the Egyptian and Ethiopian battalions, as well as the enabling units of the HSP (including units from China, Egypt, Ethiopia, Nigeria, Pakistan and the Netherlands). The deployment of these HSP units, however, is predicated on the arrival of their contingents-owned equipment (COA) and the receipt of management information system (MIS) data. Urquhart said that the second battalions offered by Ethiopia and Egypt, he continued, adding that UNAMID logistics could simply not provide support for battalions "coming in with nothing." [NOTE: The new CISS, who will replace former Chief Ian Divers, is MONUC chief engineer Bruce McCaren. He is expected to arrive in El Fasher in mid-April when the Acting Chief returns to New York. END NOTE].

THE BIGGER, NOT NECESSARILY THE BETTER

4. (SBU) The Acting CISS also stated that UNAMID cannot provide mobility for additional battalions coming in at increased strength, citing the rotating Nigerians in particular. According to the Acting CISS and the Planning Chief, two troop contributors, Nigeria and South Africa, were planning to rotate three battalions and one battalion, respectively, in at the 800-troop level between April and June. Urquhart noted there was a "disconnect" somewhere between New York and El Fasher as to troop strength for these battalions, despite alleged DPKO outreach to the Permanent Missions of troop-contributing countries on this topic. As far as deployment is concerned, Urquhart envisioned breaking up the enlarged Nigerian battalions into companies and sending one such company, for example, to El Geneina as force protection during the construction of the UNAMID "supercamp" there.

5. (SBU) The Planning Chief noted that the South African decision to rotate at the 800 vice 548 level (which is its current strength) came as a surprise during the weekend of March 29. He anticipated deploying the difference in troop level (252) around South Africa's three current bases. However, like the plused-up Nigerian battalions, this increase presents a problem for UNAMID Supply, which requires a 60-day lead time to book rations and which does so based on a 680-troop battalion. In the cases of both the Nigerians and the South Africans, Urquhart explained, Supply had inadequate time to prepare.

6. (SBU) With regard to other battalions, the Acting CISS expressed concern about the tight window for getting accommodations up to even an "austere" level by the time some forces were scheduled to arrive in April. He said that construction of the camp at Korma (intended for a Rwandan battalion) would begin in mid-April and would be able to accommodate troops by mid-July and would still need tentage even at that time. Expansion of the camp at Silea (where the Ethiopians are to go) would begin mid-April and would be ready to receive troops by the end of May, although would not be completed until November. Similarly, the Acting CISS said expansion of Kulbus (also intended for Ethiopians) would begin mid-May, would be ready for troops by end June and would be completed by December.

7. (SBU) The Acting CISS noted that all bids for camp

KHARTOUM 0000502 002 OF 002

construction/expansion had been received. However, he pointed out that UNAMID Director of Administration Mohamed Yonis is presently in Khartoum to "vet" the list of these contractors through the GoS' Committee on Darfur. The Acting CISS noted that the GoS objected to the presence of any U.S. companies in Darfur on this project (of which PA&E is one) and expressed frustration with Yonis' unilateral decision to approach the GoS on this question. At the end of the day, however, "if the Government doesn't want them in its country, then what can we do?" FieldOff noted that the Status of Forces Agreement signed by the GoS and UNAMID was intended to apply to

UNAMID contractors as well.

18. (SBU) Comment: While these limitations on UNAMID's capacity to absorb troops are not the best of news, it is positive that DPKO and UNAMID are coordinating more effectively on troop deployments and laying out a realistic plan. A better planned and managed deployment should ideally lead to a stronger and more effective UNAMID force in the face of the many challenges of operating in Darfur. We will continue to press the issue of US contractors with the GOS.

19. (U) Tripoli minimize considered.

FERNANDEZ